



BILLING CODE 3510-22-S

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Proposed Information Collection; Comment Request; Monitoring Programs for Vessels in the Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery

AGENCY: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Commerce, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on proposed and/or continuing information collections, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

DATES: Written comments must be submitted on or before **[INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER]**.

ADDRESSES: Direct all written comments to Jennifer Jessup, Departmental Paperwork Clearance Officer, Department of Commerce, Room 6616, 14th and Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20230 (or via the Internet at pracomments@doc.gov).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests for additional information or copies of the information collection instrument and instructions should be directed to the West Coast Regional Office – 7600 Sand Point Way NE, Seattle WA 98115, Keeley Kent, telephone number ((206) 526-4655), or keeley.kent@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Abstract

In 2011, NMFS mandated observer requirements for the West Coast groundfish trawl catch shares program. For all fishery sectors, observers must be obtained through third-party observer provider companies operating under permits issued by NMFS. The regulations at §§ 660.140 (h), 660.150 (j), 660.160 (g), specify observer coverage requirements for trawl vessels and define the responsibilities for observer providers, including reporting requirements. Regulations at § 660.140 (i) specify requirements for catch monitor coverage for first receivers. Data collected by observers are used by NMFS to estimate total landed catch and discards, monitor the attainment of annual groundfish allocations, estimate catch rates of prohibited species, and as a component in stock assessments. These data are necessary to comply with the Magnuson-Stevens Act requirements to prevent overfishing. In addition, observer data is used to assess fishing related mortality of protected and endangered species.

II. Method of Collection

This collection utilizes both electronic and paper forms, depending on the specific item. Methods of submittal include email of electronic forms, and mail and facsimile transmission of paper forms. Additionally, this collection utilizes interviews for some information collection and phone calls for transmission of other information.

III. Data

OMB Control Number: 0648-0500.

Form Number(s): None.

Type of Review: Regular (extension of a current information collection).

Affected Public: Business or other for-profit organizations.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 268 (5 providers (supplying a total of 75 observers or catch monitors) and 263 fishing vessels).

Estimated Time Per Response: For providers: 15 minutes for observer training/briefing/debriefing registration, notification of observer physical examination, observer status reports, other reports on observer harassment, safety concerns, or performance problems, catch monitor status reports, and other catch monitor reports on harassment, prohibited actions, illness or injury, or performance problems; 5 minutes for observer safety checklist submission to NMFS, observer provider contracts, observer information materials, catch monitor provider contracts, and catch monitor informational materials; 10 minutes for certificate of insurance; 7 minutes for catch monitor training/briefing registration, notification of catch monitor physical examination, and catch monitor debriefing registration. For vessels: 10 minutes for fishing departure reports and cease-fishing reports.

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: 525 (305 for providers and 220 for fishing vessels)

Estimated Total Annual Cost to Public: \$0 in capital costs as it is assumed that each of the 5 observer/catch monitor providers will maintain a computer system with email capacity for general business purposes and that each vessel owner/operator has access to a telephone for toll-free calls.

IV. Request for Comments

Comments are invited on: (a) whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden (including hours and cost) of the proposed collection of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or included in the request for OMB approval of this information collection; they also will become a matter of public record.

Dated: November 7, 2017.

Sarah Brabson,

NOAA PRA Clearance Officer.

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